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ELY.

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ELY URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

To: The Chairman and Members,
Ely Urban District Council.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies & Gentlemen - I have the honour to submit my Annual Report for the year ending 31st December 1958:-

1. STATISTICS: During 1958, the usual statistics have been kept and are available. These are not included in my Report.

2. GENERAL HEALTH SERVICES:

(a) Ambulances: Two Ambulances are stationed at Ely, both being operated by the Isle of Ely County Council.

The Littleport St. John Ambulance continues to work under the agency agreement with the County Council. This vehicle, which serves the local area, and those areas adjoining when necessary, continues to be of the greatest value.

The Ely and Littleport St. John Divisions continue to provide ambulance attendants. As in the past, these duties are carried out in the members "spare-time" in addition to their ordinary daily work. Sometimes, I think members of the public are apt to overlook this fact: although many do express their gratitude and thanks.

(b) Nursing and Clinic Arrangements: These are the same as for previous years. The District Nurses continue to give cheerfully their invaluable services to those needing their help.

(c) Hospitals:

(i) Tower Hospital for Chronic Sick.

(ii) St. John's Hospital for Infectious Diseases and long-stay cases.

(iii) The Grange Maternity Home.

These Hospitals are under the control of the Regional Hospital Board.

3. WATER:

(a) The supply for Ely, including Stuntney, Adelaide, Prickwillow and Chettisham is obtained from one well and two boreholes at the Council's Waterworks at Isleham. The condition of the plant including the pumping and chloramine equipment proved to be satisfactory throughout the year.

I must again draw attention to the fact that the pumping plant in the main well, will very soon require replacing.

During the year the pump for the new borehole was ordered.

So far as water storage in the City is concerned, the position remains unchanged, and I can only continue to regard the existing position with alarm. In my view, a very substantial increase in water storage is not only essential, but is quite definitely very much overdue.

In September 1958, there was a fracture of the pumping main, this was speedily repaired by the Water Engineer.

During the year, the renewal of the worst sections of the pumping main has been completed. Up to date, one third of the entire length of pumping main has now been completed.

(b) (i) Four bacteriological examinations were made during the year by the Public Health Service Laboratory at Cambridge, and all proved satisfactory.

(ii) The water has no plumbago-solvent action.

(iii) The quality and quantity of water has proved satisfactory. No contamination was discovered during the year and, therefore, no action in respect of this has been necessary.

(iv) It is calculated that 4% of houses in the District are without a proper water supply: 1% are supplied by standpipe: and the remaining 95% of houses have a proper water supply.

4. SEWAGE:

(i) Extensions: No extensions were made in 1958.

(ii) Sewage Disposal Works: During the year, the contract for the new works was signed: and there is every hope that work may be commenced by April 1959. It gives me very great pleasure to be able to report this very material step forward, as far as this urgently needed work is concerned. I hope that when the work is completed the effluent will really comply with official requirements. This is not possible under conditions obtaining at present.

(iii) The Prickwillow Disposal Works operate fairly reasonably satisfactorily, but some reconstruction will probably become necessary in the very near future.

(iv) So far as the old piped length of the Lynn Road-Downham Road watercourse is concerned, this is on the list for early attention.

5. HOUSING: It is with very great sorrow that I have to report that the Public Health Inspector was taken seriously ill just after Christmas, and that he died in August 1959, having returned to work for a few weeks only in May.

It is my custom normally to draw attention to and comment on his work in the Housing Department after consultation with him. Owing to Mr. Roy Smith's grave illness and untimely and tragic death, the normal consultations on the year's work were not possible, and I have had to rely on his records which he left for much of the usual information.

(a) Number of houses which on inspection were considered to be unfit for human habitation or in a condition prejudicial to health Approx. 200

(b) Number of preliminary notices served 2

(c) Number of representations made to the local authority with a view to:-

(i) The serving of notices requiring the execution of works 0

(ii)	The making of demolition orders	4
(iii)	The making of closing orders	1
(d)	Number of formal notices served requiring the execution of works	0
(e)	Number of houses demolished	6
(f)	Number of formal notices served under the Public Health Act 1936	0
(g)	Inspection referring to Certificates of Disrepair	11

Early in the year, the Barton Road Clearance Area was confirmed.

Improvement Grants made 6

6. SCHOOLS: I have no comments to make this year.

7. MILK: The majority of milk sold in this area is either pasteurised or T.T. or both. A very small amount is produced by persons keeping one or two cows and this is often given to their employees. There does not appear to be much control which can be exercised over this practice.

During the years since the war there has been considerable improvement in the way in which milk is sold. The Milk & Dairies Regulations (1949) have been of great help in producing these much needed improvements, and at the same time there are signs that many retailers are conscious of their responsibilities in this respect. This sense of responsibility must also extend to the employees concerned. It has been said that "the price of freedom is eternal vigilance". The same can be applied to clean milk. I feel it is necessary to stress once again, that these Regulations can and must be definitely enforced, and if and when offenders are found the necessary steps will be unhesitatingly taken.

Again, I wish to draw the Council's attention to the filthy habit observed among some members of the public in using milk bottles for fluids other than milk. I cannot condemn this practice too strongly, as well as that of leaving collections of milk bottles at pavement level within easy range of, inter alia, the passing canine population.

8. INFECTIOUS DISEASES:

(a) 27 notifications of infectious disease were received.

The total is made up as follows:-

Anterior Poliomyelitis	1
Food Poisoning	1
Measles	11
Scarlet Fever	5
Pneumonia	8
Erysipelas	1
 Total ...	27
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(b) Disinfection of premises etc., is regularly carried out in cases of notifiable disease; also when infection is reported or requests are received for any special reasons.

(c) I deplore any decrease in the vaccination of children against Small Pox, and their immunization against Diphtheria. Fortunately no case of Diphtheria has occurred in the District, but immunity can only be assured in the future when every child is immunized in infancy.

(d) Tuberculosis: 3 new cases were notified during the year. After making necessary adjustment, there are now the following numbers on the Register:-

Males: 32
Females: 17

Compared with 1957, the total figures show a decrease of 4 cases.

9. FOOD:

Premises:

(i) 10 premises are registered for the preparation of Sausages and Preserved Food.

(ii) 34 premises are registered for storage and sale of Ice Cream. There is no Ice Cream manufactured for sale in the area. In all 48 visits were paid to these premises.

(iii) There is one private slaughter house in the district. For many years it has been customary for meat inspection to be carried out by a local Veterinary Surgeon. Radical improvements will be necessary in the construction, layout and equipment of this slaughter house next year when the new Regulations come into operation.

(iv) The following is a list of food handling premises in the area:-

Butchers	11
Restaurants, Cafes and Snack Bars	8
Bakers and Confectioners	4
Grocers	12
Greengrocers	11
Licensed Premises	41
Sweets and Tobacco	10
Wet and Fried Fish	5
Wholesale Warehouse	1
School Kitchens	4
General Stores	17
Ice Cream	2
Mineral Water Manufacturers	1
Brewery	1

(b) Food Hygiene:

Despite some improvement, the position of food hygiene cannot yet be said to be satisfactory in the District.

Satisfactory conditions will only come about by the co-operation of food handlers and their employees, or by the prosecution of offenders, whether employers or employees.

.. Surely willing co-operation is to be preferred to prosecution.

Advice from the Public Health Inspector or myself is always available when it is requested. In addition, useful

booklets on the subject (for example "Clean Catering" obtainable from Her Majesty's Stationery Office for 2/6d) are available.

I beg of those responsible for the handling of food, whether employer or employee, to take my remarks very seriously. For some, attention to this vital subject may obviate unpleasant proceedings in the future.

The Public Health Inspector and I do all that is possible, and the Inspector's efforts especially have been invaluable.

In two premises wash-hand basins and/or constant hot water supplies were installed as the result of action by the Public Health Inspector.

(c) Unsound Food:

The following items of food were surrendered unfit for food and destroyed:-

9 x 6 lbs Corned Beef.
2 x 6 lbs Jellied Veal.
2 x 4 lbs)
1 x 4½ lbs) Luncheon Meat.
2 x 12 ozs.)

22 lbs Beef Chips - 30 lbs Pork Chips.
6 x 10 lbs Pigs liver.
15 lbs Bacon.
4 lbs Pork.
103 Assorted Tins, fruit, fish, milk and vegetables.

1 - 10 lb. 11 oz. Shoulder.
1 - 7 lb. 14 oz. "
1 - 10 lb. 14 oz. "
1 - 9 lb. 4 oz. "
1 - 10 lb. 9 oz. "
1 - 12 lb. 12 oz. "
1 - 12 lb. 15 oz. "
1 - 13 lb. 7 oz. "

1 - 15 lb. 3 oz. Ham.
1 - 13 lb. 14 oz. "
1 - 12 lb. 7 oz. "
1 - 12 lb. 15 oz. "
1 - 12 lb. 4 oz. "

Once again, I would draw attention to the need for special vigilance by those who handle and sell processed meat (Corned Beef, Ham etc.).

10. MISCELLANEOUS:

(i) Insect Pest Control:

No unusual problems have been encountered.

(ii) Shops:

Routine inspections have been carried out - no special problems have been met, other than those referred to under the preceding paragraph.

(iii) Rodent Control:

Your rodent operator is well known in the area for the good work he does and many of the complaints are dealt with by

him in an informal way. He has recently been devoting more time to inspection of properties, particularly agricultural properties. 297 different properties have been treated.

(iv) Smoke Abatement:

Action was taken during the year with regard to one factory where smoke formed a definite nuisance. Following discussions between your Technical Officers and the Factory Management, there was some improvement, although the nuisance was not entirely abated.

In a semi-Urban area such as Ely, smoke nuisance has not yet become a major problem. The use of smokeless fuels in domestic grates would help materially in preventing future trouble.

There is one danger, however, which is becoming increasingly urgent and evil with every passing month. I refer to the foul clouds of stinking black fumes which are discharged continuously from the exhausts of the many diesel-engined lorries and trucks.

To those of us who are daily on the road in our cars, especially when trapped by one of these monstrosities on a narrow road for some distance, this evil is apparent by the headache and nausea which is often produced by these foul clouds. It is not appreciated by many, moreover, that fumes can be blown through open windows into dwelling houses.

I am informed that if diesel engines are properly adjusted, the emission of foul and black smoke from exhausts is not necessary. In my opinion, it is high time that these adjustments were made and maintained.

I am further informed that there are in existence regulations referring to the Construction and Use of Motor Vehicles, and it appears to me that action by the appropriate authority under such regulations should be taken without delay to prevent this increasing peril caused by the discharge of carcinogenic substances by some motor vehicles on the highway.

My remarks here are amply substantiated by the findings of the Beaver Committee on Air Pollution reporting in 1954. Paragraphs 64-67 of this Report are, in fact, exceedingly pertinent and should be carefully studied by those concerned with the mitigation, if not abolition of this danger. I would draw attention in particular to Paragraph 67, which cites the relevant Regulations concerning motor vehicle exhausts. The Committee remarks - "The present law on the subject is explicit and in our view adequate". Again later on in the same paragraph it states - "There, however, is the law, and we would press that it should be enforced in future".

Even if tobacco smoke is proved to be carcinogenic (cancer - producing) this cannot in any way justify disregard of the added danger of diesel fumes: Two blacks never make a white!

(v) Moveable Dwellings:

I can only repeat my observations in my Report for 1957: Existing Legislation continues to render abortive any real constructional efforts in dealing with this problem. Sometime in the future trouble will develop, I am sure, unless more practical legislation is enacted.

(vi) Factories:

There are 13 non mechanical and 57 mechanical factories in the register. Routine inspections have been carried out and minor defects only have been found to need attention.

(vii) Common Lodging Houses:

There is one licensed Common Lodging House in the City. The premises are clean and appear to be well run.

(viii) Swimming Pool:

The season has been a satisfactory one. However, the Chloramine Plant requires continued and careful watching.

(ix) Refuse Tip:

The condition of the Tip is fair. Every effort is taken to improve conditions here.

11. PERSONAL:

During the year my colleague the Public Health Inspector, Mr. Roy E. Smith, A.M.I.P.H.E., M.A.P.H.I., has given of his best to the work of the Council, and I am more than grateful to him for his great help and cheerful and efficient assistance. His grave illness and ultimate death robbed the Council of a most efficient Officer, and deprived me of a friend and colleague, whose death was a personal loss to me.

To the Surveyor & Water Engineer, Mr. J. V. G. Shilston, A.M.I.C.E., M.I.Mun.E. etc., and his staff, my very grateful thanks are once again most willingly proffered.

I have the honour to be,
Ladies & Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

(Signed) K. S. MAURICE-SMITH,

Medical Officer of Health,
Ely Urban District Council.

3rd September, 1959.

